

Genealogy Research Material Organization

AGS Edmonton Branch
Computers in Genealogy SIG
Neal Finn - March 19, 2015

'Family' Definition is Key

- * A definition of the family in family history research helps
A family starts with a marriage or equivalent 'joining together' of two people, usually (but not always) a man (father) and a woman (mother), usually (but not always) by marriage, usually (but not always) having and raising children.
- * Material stored for each family would generally include:
 - * Marriage documents
 - * Children's birth documents
 - * Emigration and/or immigration documents
 - * Census records
 - * Death records for the mother, father and unmarried children
 - * Obituaries
 - * Individual and family photos, etc.
- * If a person doesn't get married and start their own family, their records would remain as part of their parent's family.
- * Consistency is the key. Create a pattern or method and follow it.

Folder Naming Convention

- * Folder Name

To organize the many folders (manual and computer) some type of naming convention is required. I use folder names identified by the Father's Last Name & Mother's Last Name (always using maiden name)

Example: The folder name for my grandmother, Flora MURPHY, and her first husband Severin TORGUSON would be TORGUSON-MURPHY.

- * A person can be found in several folders if they re-marry (remember the definition)

My paternal grandmother was married twice. Artifacts for the second marriage (family) are found in FINN-MURPHY

- * Some documents will belong in multiple folders (eg. a census record for families with children from multiple marriages). I duplicate the file and save it twice.

- * If two brothers/cousins marry two sisters/cousins I insert their first names to make unique folder names

WEIMAN-George-STREITENBERGER-Susan

WEIMAN-Joe-STREITENBERGER-Mary

- * I also arrange folders into groups: Father's paternal line (red), Father's maternal line (blue), Mother's paternal line (yellow) and Mother's maternal line (green)

- * Computer file folder names can be color coded with a utility such as Folder Marker

Paper and Computer Folders

Paper file folders



Computer file folders

- ▶ FamHistResearchNeal
 - ▶ 0.Misc Research Material
 - ▶ 1.Geography Based Research
 - ▶ 2.Surname Based Research
 - ▶ 3.FathersFather-FINNs
 - ▶ BARDON-FINN
 - ▶ CARRETTA-MCNALLY
 - ▶ DEVERAUX-DEVERAUX
 - ▶ DONOVAN-FINN
 - ▶ DONOVAN-Wm-J-DONOVAN-Clara
 - ▶ DRISCOLL-OFLANAGAN
 - ▶ FINN-CARTWRIGHT
 - ▶ FINN-CASSIDY
 - ▶ FINN-CLOAREC
 - ▶ FINN-HERMANN
 - ▶ FINN-JOHNSTON
 - ▶ FINN-KEATING
 - ▶ FINN-MURPHY
 - ▶ FINN-OBRIEN






















Use the same naming pattern for both paper and computer file folders.

Computer Filenames

- * For digital files, a consistent file naming is also helpful
- * I start the file name with the year of the document
- * Followed by the type of document
(eg. Marriage Reg, Census, Birth Regn, Death Regn, etc)
- * And then the person's name and other details
- * Sample:
1847 Bapt Patrick FINN St Michaels Chatham NB 4 Aug 1847.jpg
- * When sorted by the file name the folder index then reads something like a family diary

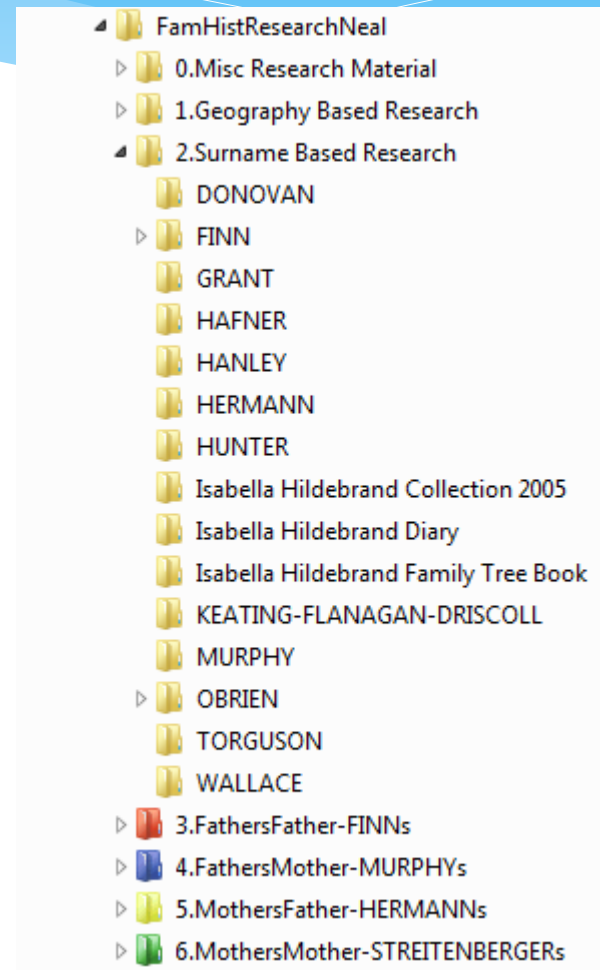
Documents library

FINN-KEATING

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name
	1851-NB-census-Others
	1845 Bapt Maria Finn do Jacobus Finn Maria Keating 12 June 1845.jpg
	1847 Bapt Patrick Finn so James Finn Mary Keating 4 Aug 1847.jpg
	1847 Bapt Patrick FINN St Michaels Chatham NB 4 Aug 1847.jpg
	1847 Saint John Almshouse Mary Finn 29 June 1847.jpg
	1849 Bapt Michael Finn St Michaels Chatham NB 8 Aug 1849.jpg
	1851 Census Daniel Eliza Finn page 15.jpg
	1851 Census James Mary Phin Finn page 26.jpg
	1851 Census page 1.jpg
	1851 Census page 92.jpg
	1851 St Michaels Chatham Bridget FINN-Baptism 19 aug 1851.jpg
	1851-NB-Census-Finns-Keatings.xls
	1853 Richard FINN Baptism Aug 1853.jpg
	1857 Cleveland Ohio Map.jpg
	1860 US Ohio Brecksville Mary and John Finn.jpg
	1860 US Ohio Cuyahoga Ward 5 James Mary Finn Page 67.jpg
	1860 US Ohio Cuyahoga Ward 5 James Mary Finn Page 68.jpg
	1860 US Ohio Cuyahoga Ward 5 James Mary Finn Transcript.jpg
	1861 Cleveland Directory James Finn pg 91.jpg
	1862 Cleveland Ohio Map.bmp
	1863 Cleveland Directory James Finn pg 126.jpg

Storing Non-Family Material

- * Miscellaneous research
Folders as required (eg. Legacy-Webinars, OCR, MiscDocs, etc)
- * Geography based research
Folders by geographic areas (eg. Ireland-Wexford, Ireland-Sligo, Scotland, Russia-Volga)
- * Family name research
Folders by family surname (eg. FINN, MURPHY, etc)



Conclusion

- * I have used this method for storing paper and computer files for over ten years now. As long as I consistently file things according to the definitions and guidelines, I can always find a document quickly.
- * I hope this helps you in arranging your documents.

Good luck in your research!